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ABSTRACT

The educational goals and principles of the Oregon public school system are presented in this booklet. Described are five belief statements, three goals and component objectives in accordance with national education goals, five superintendent's priorities in conjunction with State Board of Education goals, and indicators or "benchmarks" of goal achievement. The three state goals are: (1) to assure that Oregon's public schooling processes produce citizens who have the essential skills, knowledge, and character to be successful in a global multiculutral society and workforce; (2) to provide strong leadership to secure adequate and dependable funding for the schools; and (3) to encourage local school districts to coordinate and broker the delivery of basic social services so that every child will have an equal opportunity to develop his/her educational abilities. (LMI)

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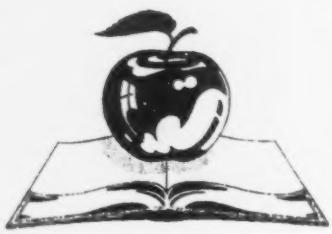
Education First!

A bold commitment for Oregon's future



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EA 023 178

Spring 1991

The mission and goals set forth in this publication reflect the commitment of the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to guarantee each and every child in Oregon a quality education.

Our goal is to provide a blueprint for public education in the future, a blueprint built on the belief that all children should have the opportunity to develop their unique abilities. To do less is to waste this state's most precious resource — our young people.

We face enormous challenges. The need for more early childhood development programs, new curriculum to give students the skills they need to compete in an increasingly complex technological world, stable school funding, and responding to problems resulting from the change in the family unit structure are just a few of the issues education must address.

After reading the document, if you have any thoughts or suggestions, the Board and I would appreciate hearing them.

Felipe Veloz
Chairman, State
Board of Education

Norma Paulus
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

State Board of Education

Mission

The mission of the State Board of Education is to assure excellent and equitable educational opportunities resulting in the development of every Oregonian's self-esteem, potential, skills and knowledge, work force productivity, and lifelong learning capabilities. The State Board will work in partnership with local school districts, community colleges, parents, teachers, administrators, and all other concerned citizens to achieve this mission.

We endorse and promote the following values in order to achieve this mission:

- High expectations for students, school staffs, parents and communities
- A clear vision of desired results
- Strong leadership
- Teamwork
- Appropriate staff development
- Safe, clean, orderly learning environments
- Accountability
- Recognition of, and rewards for excellence
- Community and family participation and support
- Lifelong learning

Beliefs

The challenges now facing public education are fundamentally different than in the past. Not only has our country left its agrarian past and experienced changes in its industrial organization, but the structure of families and the demographics of the United States' population have changed dramatically as well. These changes in the country's basic economic and family unit structures are generating significant consequences for the process of public education in this state and across the nation. If we are to revitalize the institution of public education to meet the challenges of the 21st Century, the following beliefs should guide our goals and actions.

We believe:

1. All children should have the opportunity to develop their unique abilities regardless of circumstance.

2. An excellent, multicultural, internationally competitive, equitable education for every Oregon child is critical to the preservation of our democratic society and to the state's strategy to achieve economic growth, viability, and competitiveness in a global marketplace in the 21st Century.

3. Some (and any is too many) of Oregon's students fail to receive an education that will prepare them to be competitive, productive citizens in an increasingly complex, information-oriented, technology-based world. Without comprehensive and rapid improvements in the performance of our public education system during this last decade of the century, an increasing number of children will not be able to read, write, communicate, or make critical judgments at the levels demanded by businesses for even entry-level jobs, and fewer still will possess the math, science, creative, and problem-solving skills sorely needed by our changing society and workplace.

4. An increasing percentage of our future work force will come from those population groups currently least likely to succeed academically within the existing educational system. In some districts, the last several years of educational reform have not significantly improved the plight or academic performance of these "at-risk" groups within the state. We must stimulate local districts to consider research-proven reforms and methodology to improve the performance of all Oregon students in essential skill and knowledge areas. We should continue to evaluate successful school programs and foster their replication statewide.

5. In order to be minimally prepared to learn, today's diverse school populations and their families require a wide array of basic social services to support them before the process of education can successfully occur. In collaboration with government and social service agencies, schools must help.

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Goal I*

Assure that the state's public schooling processes produce citizens who have the essential skills, knowledge, and character to be successful in a global multicultural society and work force.

- Establish high, specific, and appropriate skill and knowledge performance expectations for all Oregon children at all grade levels in the state.
- Establish a statewide system of accountability which provides the State Board of Education and the citizens of Oregon with a regular, consistent assessment of performance in every public elementary, middle, and secondary school in the state.
- Encourage restructuring of public schooling systems and processes to meet more adequately the diverse professional, vocational, and personal needs of all students.
- Provide technical assistance to districts to support the development of educational programs, curriculum and instructional materials which provide opportunity for student excellence and encourage desired student outcomes.
- Encourage the development and use of innovative teacher and school staff preparation and inservice training programs that prepare teachers, administrators, and other school staff to meet the changing requirements of educating students for the 21st Century.
- Provide technical assistance and leadership to school districts to assure increased high school completion rates across the state.

Goal II

Provide strong leadership to secure adequate and dependable funding for Oregon schools.

- Assure that local districts have the capability to deliver fully on their commitment to provide an excellent, comprehensive, equitable, multicultural education for all students in the state.
- Work with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Oregon Legislature and others to insure adequate funding dedicated to providing Oregon's elementary and secondary pupils with a "standard" education.
- Provide leadership in increasing the public's awareness of Oregon's educational standards, programs, improvement efforts, performance, and challenges through better and increased public communications, more frequent public information forums, and improved communication and coordination with other concerned constituencies.

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* The State Board of Education's goals for community colleges are set out in a companion booklet that will be available in late spring 1991.

Goal III

Encourage local school districts to coordinate and broker the delivery of basic social services to their communities' children and families so that every child in the state will have an equal opportunity to develop his/her unique educational abilities.

- Provide technical assistance to districts to help identify those social services needed by their students and families in order for them to be successful.
- Provide technical assistance to help districts develop partnerships with appropriate social service providers and community groups to deliver needed social services.
- Work with other state agencies to provide resources and collaborative models for the delivery of social services to preschool and school-age children.
- Encourage the elimination of duplication and fragmentation of both funding and service delivery to preschool populations and their families.

National Education Goals

Developed by the Task Force on Education and adopted by the National Governors' Association in 1990, these national goals are in accord with the goals and priorities established for Oregon education:

Goal 1: Readiness for school	By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.
Goal 2: High School Completion	By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
Goal 3: Student Achievement in Citizenship	By the year 2000, American students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.
Goal 4: Science and Mathematics	By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.
Goal 5: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning	By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
Goal 6: Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools	By the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

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Superintendent's Priorities

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction has pledged to make "Education First." To do this requires stable school funding so schools will have a predictable foundation upon which to build and maintain the programs that are effective and meet the needs of Oregon's children.

The following priorities directly correspond with the State Board of Education Goals:

A. **Leading the state's efforts in Early Childhood Education.**

The Oregon Department of Education will lead the state toward a vision of nurturing Oregon's future through early childhood education. A comprehensive early childhood system will support the total development of the child from birth through eight years of age. Programs for children of this age group must follow developmentally appropriate practices including the integration of parent education and family support programs with education.

B. **Preparing a quality workforce for the year 2000.**

By the year 2000, every high school student, every post-secondary student, and every adult in Oregon will have several viable options to gain basic skills, work-ready skills, occupational skills or advanced degree skills that will allow reasonable entry into the work force, with provisions to receive additional training or upgrading or allow exit from the workplace to enter full-time education. A significant restructuring of Oregon's high schools and modification of present standards, policies and regulations are essential.

C. **Reducing unnecessary burdens on classrooms, schools and districts.**

The Department will develop processes and practices to reduce unnecessary burdens and free district staff to spend time on appropriate school improvement practices. This process will include the streamlining of curriculum documents as well as standardization requirements. Restructuring of the school site requires that teachers and administrators have the time to plan and implement change that will positively affect the lives of their students.

D. **Establishing a research development and dissemination service.**

Research, innovation and "best practice" will be incorporated into every department function and disseminated to every school in Oregon. The Department of Education will become a clearinghouse for dissemination of research findings through an interactive network to communicate with schools, higher education, and other state and private agencies. Accurate and timely information is essential for decision making by the Department of Education staff and other educational agencies.

E. **Providing service with accountability.**

Schools will be held responsible for students' learning. The standardization program will be more outcome oriented. Schools will be given the latitude to design their programs to satisfy state goals while being held accountable for student achievement based on results of statewide assessment and other measures. Department staff will provide necessary technical assistance and staff development for schools so they may reach individual school improvement goals. Site visits will be used primarily to assess compliance with mandated programs.

Oregon Benchmarks

Oregon Shines: An Economic Strategy for the Pacific Century (May 1989), identified a quality workforce as one of three key areas in which Oregon can distinguish itself in the future. Based on our heritage of excellence in education and the critical importance of workforce quality to our future economic competitiveness, *Oregon Shines* proposed the ambitious goal of building the best workforce in America by the year 2000.

"We want to be the best . . . *the best educated and trained people in America by the year 2000, and equal to any in the world by the year 2010.* First, we will raise Oregonians' fundamental skills: our ability to read and understand, to solve problems, to learn, to function in the workplace and to take advantage of occupation-specific training. Second, we will provide superior access to that occupation-specific training . . . . Third, we will foster . . . pursuits fundamental to our qualities as a people."*

The State Board of Education and the Oregon Department of Education are committed to this goal and integrally involved in carrying it out.

Using *Oregon Shines* as a framework, in January 1991 the Oregon Progress Board released *Oregon Benchmarks: Setting Measurable Standards for Progress.* That report examined the demands of a global economy and established expectations for an exceptionally competent, self-reliant, skilled, and globally knowledgeable people. To measure progress toward this goal, the report set out benchmarks; several correspond directly with the state educational goals and priorities. For example:

Are preschoolers ready to learn?	___ percentage of children entering kindergarten meeting specific developmental standards for their age
Are students succeeding in school?	___ percentage of students who achieve basic established skill levels in third, fifth, eighth, and eleventh grades
Are students prepared for the transition from high school?	___ percentage of high school students enrolled in vocational and technical education programs

* *Oregon Benchmarks: Setting Measurable Standards for Progress.* Oregon Progress Board, Salem, Oregon 97310. January 1991. *Oregon Benchmarks* and *Oregon Shines* are both available from the Oregon Progress Board.

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